

Montgomery County School Health Council

December 7, 2020 Meeting Minutes

Gail Warner	Community Member, SHC Co-Chair	Daniel Russ	Community Member, SHC Co-chair
Marla Caplon	MCPS Food & Nutrition	Alana Arorin	Commission on Health
Robin Brannan	Community Member	Sandy Salsberg	Community Member
Elizabeth Rathbone	MCPS OSFSE	Liz Elliott	MCDHHS School Health Services
Deborah Merke	Community Member	Peter Park	MCPS Systemwide Safety
Drew Warner	Student Member	Katie Elliott	Student Member
Teresa Shatzer	MCPS Health Education	Joanie Glick	Senior Administrator, SHS
Kirsten Anderson	Linkages to Learning		
Guest:	Sean O'Donnell, Public Health Emergency Preparedness		

- The meeting was called to order by Gail Warner, and the minutes from the September 2020 meeting were approved.
- Sean O'Donnell provided a briefing on the County's COVID-19 Emergency Response. Topics included Community Testing, Contact Tracing, Outbreak Investigations, and Vaccine Response Planning. Efforts are being coordinated by a 7-person Public Health Emergency Response and Preparedness team, with the much appreciated assistance of School Health Services staff to support these many and varied efforts. COVID-19 metrics went down after the initial rise, and are now heading back up again. Hospitals have increased their bed capacity to care for COVID-19 patients, and initial ventilator issues have been addressed. Now, the positivity rate is 6.5% in Montgomery County and 7.9% in the State of Maryland. Acute care bed utilization is increasing. The County expects vaccination to start the week of December 22nd, and will be targeted initially at long term care facilities and hospital staff; then to essential workers; then to adults with co-morbidities and people over age 65. Discussion focused on return to school and impact on rates of transmission. In other counties in Maryland, schools that were initially open closed due to an increase in outbreaks. Currently, a number of private schools are open, and there are a number of resources focused on outbreaks in day care and private schools.
- Peter Park from MCPS Systemwide Safety shared information about the MCPS COVID Data Dashboard that outlines metrics and information about COVID focused on MCPS. Many mitigation efforts are underway. MCPS has invested \$1.7 million in HVAC systems for school buildings. Additionally, electrostatic sprayers will be purchased for each school. There are 10 model schools that were set up for COVID-safe instruction to assist with identifying helpful strategies. Each school will have an isolation space separate from the health room. PPE supplies for health room staff include surgical masks and N95 masks for use when caring for students with CLI.
- Elizabeth Rathbone from MCPS OSFSE shared information from the Board of Education meeting last week. There is increased attention on the COVID metrics in the County and the State, and a decision regarding re-opening for in-person learning was deferred until December 15th. Planning for mitigation strategies including masks, social distancing and enhanced cleaning will continue. MCPS continues to focus attention to the impact of COVID restrictions on mental health and a widening of the achievement gap.
- Joanie Glick from School Health Services shared that over 350 staff are re-deployed to support the County's COVID-19 response. Staff are working to support COVID-19 testing clinics; contact tracing and outbreak investigations; and the COVID-19 Call Center. Some SHS staff are working to support virtual efforts to support MCPS students, such as coordinating information regarding student immunization status.
- School Health Council Meetings will be remotely scheduled on MS Teams until further notice for the remainder of SY 2020-2021. March 22, 2021 and May 10, 2021.
- Meeting adjourned.